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STATINTL

Marine

Greek Shipowner Files 14½-Million Onassis Suit

By Walter Harnschar

A \$14,500,000 breach of contract suit against Aristotle Socrates Onassis, tanker and whaling fleet operator, was instituted yesterday by Spyridon Catipodis, a Greek shipowner, in New York Supreme Court.

The court action is the third initiated by Mr. Catipodis against Mr. Onassis, whose tankers, freighters and whaling vessels operate all over the world.

Saudi Arabia Concession

Mr. Catipodis has accused Mr. Onassis, who also owns the Monte Carlo casino, of failing to carry out his agreement with Mr. Catipodis to pay a fee of \$1,000,000 and a percentage of profits for the part Mr. Catipodis played in paving the way for Mr. Onassis to secure a preferential oil transportation concession from Saudi Arabia.

The concession has been under fire from members of the Arabian American Oil Co. as a violation of its previous oil production concession from Saudi Arabia. The dispute has been submitted to arbitration.

Mr. Catipodis' latest suit was instituted by the law firm of Alfange & Friedman, 9 E. 40th St. Dean Alfange, a partner in the firm, said yesterday that Mr. Onassis was served with the complaint several weeks ago while in this country. The suit is in addition to a \$1,600,000 damage suit filed last year by Mr. Catipodis against Mr. Onassis in the same court.

Mr. Alfange said the action was started in New York because Mr. Onassis maintains offices and owns a home in the city. He added that "we feel that justice will be swiftly done in the courts of this state."

Charges Disappearing Ink

The suit is based on a written agreement which Mr. Catipodis said he obtained from Mr. Onassis for negotiating the Saudi Arabian contract. The agreement called for Mr. Catipodis to be paid 2 per cent of gross freights received by Mr. Onassis on the oil transported during the thirty-year life of the concession.

Mr. Catipodis alleged that the signature of Mr. Onassis was in disappearing ink and that Mr. Onassis promised to deliver another signed agreement when the fading signature was called to his attention. No subsequent agreement was delivered.

Mr. Onassis has acknowledged that he had some business relations with Mr. Catipodis but denied that he signed any contract with disappearing ink. He described Mr. Catipodis' charge as the product of a "vivid imagination."

Mr. Catipodis filed a criminal complaint in Paris against Mr. Onassis in November, 1954, alleging fraud. The court has not yet acted on the charge.

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